



Planning and Project Implementation Update



July 2003

ABOUT THIS UPDATE

The purpose of the Chippewa Quarterly is to provide a summary of environmental analyses on the Chippewa National Forest. Issued quarterly, this is intended to complement other public involvement efforts initiated by the Forest Supervisor or District Rangers. Legal notices will continue to be published in the following local newspapers: Bemidji's *The Pioneer* for Forest Supervisor decisions; and Blackduck's *American*, *Cass Lake Times*, *Western Itasca Review*, and Walker's *The Pilot-Independent* for District Ranger decisions.

Projects are classified into one of three categories:

Environmental Analyses in Progress

This category includes projects in which public input is being or is about to be solicited. It also includes those projects that are currently under study or analysis. Environmental analyses include Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), Environmental Assessments (EA), and Categorical Exclusions (CE).

Completed Decision Documents

These are projects that have culminated in the preparation of completed environmental analyses and decision documents since the last issue. These decision documents include Records of Decision (ROD), Decision Notices (DN), and Decision Memos (DM). Findings of No Significant Impacts will be included in this category, also.

Proposals withdrawn or deferred

Some projects are initiated and published in this Quarterly but may be withdrawn or deferred for various reasons. These projects may or may not be picked up for completion at a later date. Project summaries include reasons for discontinuing the project.

HOW YOU CAN BECOME INVOLVED

Read through the list of proposed projects. If you want to provide site-specific comments on a project, get more information, or be placed on the project mailing list, write or call the contact person listed for that project. We value your site-specific involvement. A generic statement of interest in all projects is not specific enough. It is only through site-specific input that we can be responsive to and incorporate your concerns into project development. Project specific involvement is required for standing.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Appeal Period - The 45-day period after publication of a decision in which an appeal can be filed.

Categorical Exclusion (CE) - A category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. Neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required.

Comment Period - The time allowed for interested persons to provide comments to a Responsible Official on a proposed action.

Decision Memo (DM) - A concise written record of the responsible official's decision to implement an action that has been categorically excluded from documentation.

Decision Notice (DN) - A concise written record of the responsible official's decision based on an environmental assessment and a finding of no significant impact.

Environmental Assessment (EA) - A document that presents issues and concerns important to a project, alternate means of accomplishing a project, and environmental effects of each of those alternatives.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) - This document is required for proposed actions that may have significant effects on the human environment. The contents are similar to an environmental assessment, and it includes some additional sections.

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) - A document prepared by a federal agency presenting the reasons why an action, not otherwise excluded, will not have a significant effect on the human environment and for which an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

NEPA - National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The procedural guide for the decision making process for site-specific projects.

Proposed Action - A proposal made by the Forest Service to authorize, recommend, or implement an action on National Forest System lands to meet a specific purpose and need which is subject to public notice comment provisions.

Scoping - Includes internal and public involvement to determine the range of issues to be addressed. Scoping aids in the development of alternatives for a proposed action.

Significance - As used in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), requires consideration of both context and intensity.

Anticipated "Walk-in" Business

Requests from the public occasionally necessitate analyses be completed with a short turn-around. This may mean that decisions are made without prior announcement in this Update. As these projects come up for consideration however, they will continue to be announced by legal notices in newspapers. Examples of walk-in requests include special use roads and utility rights-of-way. Scoping efforts for these requests will be conducted as applicable.

Forest Policy on Distributing Documents

Draft and Final Environmental Assessments and Decision Notices/FONSI's and Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements and Records of Decision are routinely mailed to individuals who submit written comments to any projects. We do not routinely distribute biological assessments or biological evaluations with the previously listed documents. If you wish to receive biological evaluations or biological assessments for NEPA projects, please contact the district and/or Supervisor's Office NEPA Coordinators.

Privacy on Comments Received

Comments received in response to solicitation as part of the NEPA process, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on a proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Parts 215 or 217. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within stated number of days.

SCHEDULE OF NEPA PROPOSED ACTIONS

Blackduck Ranger District
417 Forestry Drive
Blackduck, MN 56630
(218) 835-4291 TTY: (218) 835-4189

TRACY BECK, District Ranger
NEPA Coordinator: Leo Johnson (ljohnson@fs.fed.us)

Environmental Analyses in Progress

| Project Number | Project Name | Location | Description | Scoping Status | Analysis Status | Expected Decision Date | Contact Person |
|----------------|--|---|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| B110 | County Road 22 Reconstruction & Easement | T148N,R31W | Reconstruct and pave the county road | Scoping completed | Analysis in Progress | August, 2003 | Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107 |
| B111 | Bowstring River Bridge Replacement | T149N,R27W, Sec. 23 and 26 | Easement (about 400 feet by 66 feet) and replace a narrow bridge | Scoping completed | Analysis in Progress | August 2003 | Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116 |
| B119 | Rambling Woods Resource Management | T146N,R29,30,31W, T147N,R29,30,31W T148N,R30,31W T149N,R30,31W | Timber Sale, Vegetation Treatments, Prescribed Burning, Roads, Watershed; Minor Recreation Projects. | Scope in August 2003 | Analysis in progress. | December 2003 | Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107 |
| B121 | Bridge Rehab | Various locations across forest. | Repairs may include wing walls, rip rap, pile caps, and rail posts | Scoping done April 2003 | Analysis in progress. | August 2003. | Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107 |
| B120 | Bridge Replacement | Mitt Lake Creek T150N R27 W Sec 21 | Replace bridge. | Scoping done April 2003 | Analysis in progress. | Fall/winter 2003. | Bill Yourd (218)-335-8672 |

Completed Decision Documents

| Project Number | Project Name | Location | Description | Decision Approval Date | Appeal Due Date | Appeal Review Date | Contact Person |
|----------------|---------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|--|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| B106 | Sandplain Vegetation Management | T145 28, 29,30 T146 29, 30 | Timber harvest, prescribed burning, fuels reduction along Big Fish Road, improve parking in Winnie Campground. | DN signed July 11, 2003. | Legal Notice for Appeal Period published July 13, 2003 | September 2003 | Mark VanTassel (218) 835-3112 |
| B108 | Cass Lake Vegetation Management | T145N,R30,31W; T146N,R30,31W, T147N,R31W | Timber Sale, Vegetation Treatments, Prescribed Burning, Roads, Watershed; Norway Beach parking lot, Norway Beach Work Center Building, and Star Island toilet | Decision Notice signed 5/22/2003 | Legal Notice for Appeal Period 5/25/2003 | September 2003 | Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107 |
| B115 | Beaulieu Road Paving | T147N, R31W | Pave ¼ mile of FR 2211E for access to private housing area near Flora Lake. Reduce erosion and dust. Increase safety. | Decision Memo signed 3/27/03 | Not appealable | N/A | Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116 |
| ---- | Pughole Underground Powerline | T146N R30W Sec. 6 | Replace current overhead line with a buried line in a road clearing (FR3440). | Decision Memo signed 5/16/2003. | Not appealable | N/A | Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116 |

Supervisors Office
Cass Lake

Completed Decision Documents

| Project Number | Project Name | Location | Description | Decision Approval Date | Appeal Due Date | Appeal Review Date | Contact Person |
|----------------|--------------------|--|--|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| | SO Fuels Reduction | T145 R31W 16 SO Admin Site in Cass Lake | Fuels reduction in dense stands surrounding Supervisor's Office. | DM signed 5-28-03 | Non-appealable | | Dennis Parker (218)-835-8688 |

Walker Ranger District
201 Minnesota Ave. East
Walker, MN 56484
(218) 547-1044 Fax: (218) 547-3260

THOMAS G. SOMRAK, District Ranger
NEPA Coordinator: Chris Brunner (cbrunner@fs.fed.us)

Environmental Analyses in Progress

| Project Number | Project Name | Location | Description | Scoping Status | Analysis Status | Expected Decision Date | Contact Person |
|----------------|--|---|---|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| W64 | Boy River Resource Management | T141-143N R26-29W | Prescribed burning, timber harvest, road decommissioning, and snowmobile trail reroutes. Decision on timber harvest made (see below). Decisions on burning, snowmobile routes, and decommissioning forthcoming. | Scoping completed | Completed | August and September 2003 | Christine Brunner (218) 547-1044 |
| W70 | Various Lands Special Use Permit Re-Issuance | District-wide | Evaluate the renewal of road special use permits near expiration to access private land. Permits are valid for five years. | Ongoing | Ongoing | Throughout the year | Jim Tande (218) 547-1044 |
| W71 | Leech Lake River Resource Management | T142-T145N R26-28W | Timber harvest, prescribed burning, planting, and road decommissioning | Scoping completed | Analysis in progress | December 2003 | Christine Brunner (218) 547-1044 |
| W72 | Remer Repeater Tower | T141N R27 Sec. 10 | Project dropped—Forest Service entered into a cooperative agreement with Minnesota Dept. Natural Resources to rent space on an existing tower. | -- | -- | -- | Gary Roerick (218) 547-1044 |
| W73 | Pipeline Maintenance | Numerous spots along pipeline that crosses Walker district. | Maintenance of pipeline and corridor. Digs to inspect pipeline that are necessary to ensure spills/leaks do not occur. | Scoping completed. | Analysis in progress | October 2003 | Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655 |
| W74 | Bridge Replacement | Laura Lake Creek T141N R 27W Sec. 25 | Replace bridge | Scoping completed | Analysis in progress | Fall/winter 2003 | Bill Yourd (218) 335-8672 |
| W76 | Noxious Weed Control | T142N R31W, Sec. 5 | Control of a spotted knapweed infestation with prescribed burning. | Scope in July | Analysis in progress | August 2003 | John Casson (218) 547-1044 |

Completed Decision Documents

| Project Number | Project Name | Location | Description | Decision Approval Date | Appeal Due Date | Appeal Review Date | Contact Person |
|----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| W64 | Boy River Resource Management | T141-143N R26-29W | Decision made on timber harvest portion of the project. | DN signed July 1, 2003 | Legal ad published on July 3, 2003 | September 2003 | Christine Brunner (218) 547-1044 |
| W75 | Noxious Weed Control | T142N R30W, Sec. 10 and 15 | Control of a garlic mustard infestation by burning individual plants. | May 2003 | Non-appealable | N/A | John Casson (218) 547-1044 |

Deer River/Marcell Ranger District
1037 Division Street
Deer River, MN 56636
(218) 246-2123 TTY: (218) 246-9743

Marcell Office
49554 State Hwy 38
Marcell, MN 56657
(218) 832-3161

WADE SPANG, District Ranger
NEPA Coordinator: Michael Jiménez (mjimenez@fs.fed.us)

| Project Number | Project Name | Location | Description | Scoping Status | Analysis Status | Expected Decision Date | Contact Person |
|----------------|--|--|---|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| D29 | Private Road Access to Bowstring Lake Property | T147N, R26W, Section 2, SWSW and Section 11, NWNW. | Applicant has requested special use permit for a ¼ mile road crossing NF lands to access private land | Scoping completed | Analysis in progress | July 2003. | Gregg Alle (218) 832-3161 |
| D45 | Cuffe Road Special Use Permit | T148N, R26W, Section 35 SESE. | Purpose is to determine if a road permit should be granted to cross National Forest lands. | Scoping completed | Analysis in progress | October 2003. | Jane Munnell (218) 246-2123 |
| D46 | Noard Road Special Use Permit | T141N, R25, Section 15. | Purpose is to determine if a road permit should be granted to cross National Forest lands. | Scoping completed. | Analysis in progress | October 2003. | Jane Munnell (218) 246-2123 |
| D41 | Upper Bowstring Intergrated Resource Project (IRP) | Encompasses the Upper Bowstring Watershed including Spring, Jessie, Rice, Caribou, and Turtle Lakes. | Evaluates the management options related to vegetative, wildlife, & watershed management and restoration in the Upper Bowstring Watershed. | Scoping completed | Analysis in progress. | September 2003. | Michael Jimenez (218) 246-2123 |
| D44 | Various Lands Special Use Permit Re-Issuance | Various locations throughout Marcell/Deer River Ranger Districts. | Evaluates the renewal of land special use permits near expiration. The majority of these permits involve road uses and are valid for five years. | Ongoing scoping | Analysis in progress | October 2003. | Dave Sorenson (218) 246-2123 |
| M53 | Rice Lake Access an Snowmobile Trail Reroute | T60N, R26W, Section 32. | Proposal is to consider a snowmobile trail re-route and trailhead improvement. | Scoping completed | Analysis in progress | September 2003. | Michelle Heiker (218) 246-2123 |
| D42 | Eagle Nest Road | Road extends from Hwy 46 to South Deer Lake Campground. T147N, R27W, Sections 14,15,21,22, &28. | Project will look at small realignments, reconstructing bridges and adding bituminous surface to Eagle Nest Road. Project will also encompass the rehabilitation of East and West Seelye Campgrounds adjacent to this road. | Scoping completed. | Analysis initiated in December 2002. | August 2003. | Mike Martin (218) 335-8633 |
| D47 | Pipeline Maintenance | Numerous spots along pipeline that crosses Deer River district. | Maintenance of pipeline and corridor. Digs to inspect pipeline that are necessary to ensure spills/leaks do not occur. | Scoping done in spring 2003 | Analysis in progress | October 2003 | Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655 |
| D48 | Bridge Replacement | Two Mile Creek T147 N R 26W Sec 30 Long Lake Creek T143N R25W Sec 30 | Replace bridge | Scoping done in spring 2003 | Analysis in progress | Fall/winter 2003 | Bill Yourd (218)-335-8672 |
| M55 | Bridge Rehab | Various locations | Repairs may include wing walls, rip rap, pile caps, and rail posts | Scoping done in spring 2003 | Analysis in progress | Fall/winter 2003 | Bill Yourd (218)-335-8672 |
| M56 | Hwy 6 Reconstruction | Hwy 6 north of Talmoon | Resurfacing and widening of road. Federal Highway Administration planning/coordinating the project. | Completed | Analysis in progress | Summer 2003 | John Freetly (218) 335-8687 |

Completed Decision Documents

| Project Number | Project Name | Location | Description | Decision Approval Date | Appeal Due Date | Appeal Review Date | Contact Person |
|----------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| D49 | Spring Lake Creek Rock Spawning Riffle Project | T148 R25W Sec28 Spring Lake Creek | Fisheries habitat enhancement project of placing rock spawning riffles and restoring pool habitat | DM signed 6-27-03 | Non-appealable | | Chantel Cook (218)-835-8662 |

Proposed Forest Plans and Draft Environmental Analysis available for comment July 2003

The Chippewa and Superior National Forests have completed a joint Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and an individual Proposed Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) for each Forest. The Proposed Forest Plans propose management direction for the next ten to 15 years. The Forest Service is encouraging public review and comment on the Draft EIS and Proposed Forest Plans. The public comment period ends on August 11, 2003.

Documents available to the public include an Executive Summary for the Draft EIS, separate Proposed Forest Plans for the Chippewa and for the Superior National Forest, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement which discusses the analysis for both national forests, large- scale color maps of the alternatives, and a Reviewer's Guide. The documents are available in paper copy and on computer CD. Paper copies of the documents will be available for viewing at several area university and community libraries. These documents are also accessible on the Internet along with, maps and background information at: www.fs.fed.us/r9/chippewa. A new tool called the Mapsever is also available on this website to aid in comparing the alternatives.

The Draft EIS documents analysis of potential environmental impacts associated with seven alternative management approaches. The focus is on specific resource issues and alternatives identified through public involvement earlier in the process. The analysis includes biological, social, and economic issues related to the communities within and around the Forests and the natural resources on the Forests.

The Proposed Forest Plans are based on Alternative E, which is currently preferred, by the Forest Service. Alternative E would emphasize a mix of young and old forest settings, increase the amount of uneven-aged management from what is currently used, and emphasize a mix of developed and undeveloped recreation with motorized and non-motorized opportunities.

The purpose of these draft documents is to provide a basis for substantive review and comment by interested parties before a decision is made. The Forest Service will consider all written or emailed comments, but will only be able, in the final analysis, to address meaningful comments with specific concerns or suggestions. Substantive comments will help tailor the final analysis leading to a decision expected to be released in approximately January 2004.

For more information:

Chippewa National Forest web site: www.fs.fed.us/r9/chippewa

Specific questions concerning revision may be directed to:

Duane Lula, Forest Planner, Superior National Forest (218) 626-4300

Steve Ludwig, Forest Planner, Chippewa National Forest (218) 335-8657

Kay Getting, Chippewa Public Affairs, (218) 335-8673

Kris Reichenbach, Superior Public Affairs, (218) 626-4300

In order to request revision documents not available on the internet:

Please call (218) 335-8681, tstruecker@fs.fed.us

Large print available upon request.

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Individuals and organizations with legal, economic, or preservation interests may request to participate in consultation on the project's effects on historic properties.

Chippewa National Forest
200 Ash Avenue NW
Cass Lake, MN 56633-8929